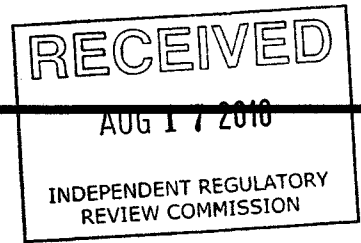


Cooper, Kathy

2857



From: Matthew Chimenti [mchimenti@roadrunner.com]
Sent: Saturday, August 07, 2010 2:46 PM
To: EP, RegComments
Subject: 25 Pa. Code Ch. 78

The American Petroleum Institute, the trade association for the oil and gas industry, has issued its latest estimate on the net worth of the Marcellus Shale gas deposit as having the potential to exceed 2 trillion dollars for their industry along with the associated billions in tax revenues for the bordering states. The dollar value of this resource is immense as is the benefit of a cleaner and stable energy source for the United States. However as stated by Don Welsh of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council it is analogous to the California Gold Rush, in essence a Wild West, where the lure of incredible wealth could come at a very high price to the environment and in the lives of a large number of Pennsylvania residents.

Of primary concern is the contamination of water tables; either through the hydraulic fracturing drilling process itself, poorly constructed well casings or ground water runoff. Unfortunately under the Bush Administration with Dick Chaney the industry in 2005 was exempted from the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act using the fracturing process. This is very convenient for the industry as 9 out of 10 gas wells now drilled within the United States are done by this method. Essentially if the gas industry begins to destroy your water table you have no federal oversight to help you. The New York State Senate, as of August 4th, passed a nine month moratorium on drilling operations in Upstate New York. This is to protect that state's aquifers as mounting evidence suggests that all is not safe with the gas industries current methods. Unfortunately our PA lawmakers have not seen fit to do the same. A friend of mine who works for this state's DEP gave an estimate of around 1,000 new drilling permits issued per month statewide. That is 12,000 possible new gas wells per year and this is just the start of our gas rush. With looming budget issues such as the 800 million dollar Medicaid shortfall the state DEP has already been informed of potential job cuts, including those departments that oversee gas-drilling operations in Pennsylvania.

The economic benefits of this gas deposit are huge, just as large however are the potential for dire and long lasting health and environmental issues due to lack of planning and oversight. Contaminated water can't be consumed by you, farm animals or used to water your crops. An economic boom would be wonderful but it does not have to happen at the expense of your health and environment. 2 Trillion dollars for the gas industry and billions in tax revenues insures that there is enough money to do this correctly. We can afford both, well managed exploitation of the Marcellus Shale and a safe and healthy environment. Please ensure that there are adequate resources, both legislatively and manpower wise for the DEP to be effective in protecting all of Pennsylvania's residents.

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